

②

Page 14

G.T. &amp; T. hears—

# Region Three needs 30,000 telephone lines

BY TERRENCE  
ESSEBOOM

THE SLUGGISH pace of the Region Three, (Essequibo Islands/West Demerara) telephone expansion programme was the topic of discussions yesterday between Regional representatives and officials of the Guyana Telephone and Telegraph Company (GT&T) Limited.

Region Three Chairman Mr Pariag Sukhai told reporters before the start of yesterday's meeting at Telephone House, Brickdam, Georgetown, that enraged rural residents are "fighting us", for new telephone lines.

Sukhai said that some 30,000 lines are needed in the agricultural communities of the Region, but at present less than 2,000 active telephone lines are available there.

He cited a boom in population from an estimated 100,000 in 1983 to approximately 150,000 at present living between Parika

and Patentia.

Households have grown in that period from 28 000 to 35,000, Sukhai told reporters.

Access to telecommunication services is "integral" to development schemes in the thriving agrarian communities, and the leisurely rate of installation of new lines is a vexing problem for residents, he commented.

The Region is developing rapidly, but telephone expansion is "lagging behind", the Chairman said.

He said that yesterday's discussions between the two sides would focus on plans by the utility for increasing telephones in the predominantly agricultural region.

"We (expect) some good responses from them," Sukhai commented in the pre-talks interview.

Sukhai acknowledged some expansion activities in the community, but was critical that these do not take place in heavily populated areas.

Members of the Region Three team also included Mr Ramenought Bisram, Vice Chairman, Mr Narain Dyal, Mr Roopchand and Mr Shaheed Ahama of the Regional Democratic Council (RDC) and Mr Brijlall Ramprashad, Regional Executive Officer

Guyana  
Chronicle

Aug. 27 1998



①

REGION THREE NEEDS 30 000 telephone lines  
[Handwritten note: 30 000 telephone lines]  
[Handwritten note: Regional Executive Office]  
[Handwritten note: 101 Regent Street]

Guyana Chronicle, Thursday, August 27, 1998



Mr Raymond Roopnauth (with microphone) speaking with Region Three representatives, yesterday.

(REO).

Appearing for the GT&T were Mr Raymond Roopnauth, General Manager; Mr Terry Holder, Deputy General Manager, Human Resources and Public Relations; Mr Eustace Abrams, Director of Complex Services; Ms Pat Hinds, Manager, Business Services; Mr Godfrey Statia, Deputy General Manager, Business and Regulatory Affairs; Mr Lennox Lee, Director of Residential and Small Business; Mr Lennox Cornette, Public Relations Officer and Mr Gerald De Freitas, Director, Systems Engineer.

Roopnauth told the Region Three delegation that the company is "doing its best and it is hard for anybody else to do better".

Acknowledging some problems faced by the utility, Roopnauth mentioned the ongoing rates tiff with the Public Utilities Commission (PUC).

GT&T, he said is anxious to accelerate the expansion programme but is constrained by a shortage of funding to undertake the venture.

"As much as we would like to expand the service and move the pace along, we also think we need to get your understanding and ...support in ensuring that in running this business we are able to pay for it and...expand at the speed demanded by the public," Roopnauth said.

The utility has failed to meet its expansion plans agreed with the Government in 1991, when the company was privatised making it a subsidiary

of Atlantic TeleNetwork (ATN).

The PUC extended the deadline twice, but the company has still been unable to complete the scheme within the new time frame.

Some 55,000 active telephone lines now exist locally and more than 45,000 persons are on the company's waiting list.

A GT&T market research as reported in the Stillon Report, concluded that the 1997 total demand for basic telephone in Guyana was 102,000.

This means that some 46,000 persons, or 45 per cent of the market demand, is not currently met by the utility.

At the current rate of GT&T's expansion programme - approximately 6,000 new lines

annually - GT&T will be unable to meet any reasonable demands for telephones by Guyanese.

In an interview with the Chronicle Saturday, Guyana's Honorary Trade Representative in Minneapolis, USA, Mr Earl Singh, also an Attorney-at-Law, said that if he is granted a licence to operate a digital wireless system, he can remove this backlog of potential subscribers on GT&T's waiting list, in just 18 months.

At yesterday's meeting with the Regional representatives, which Roopnauth said GT&T welcomed, he emphasised that the company wants to meet with other local interest bodies to develop mutual understanding between the parties.



# GT&T introduces voice mail

By Courtney Jones

The Guyana Telephone and Telegraph Company (GT&T) has announced the introduction of a voice mail service as it moves to improve and broaden the range of features on offer to its customers this year.

Manager of Complex Services, Pat Hinds, told reporters at a luncheon hosted by GT&T for the press last week, that as the company begins to gear itself for the new millennium it has realised that it needs a range of services to meet the needs of its customers.

Hinds described the system as a simpler way to receive accurate messages since the technology ensures that the telephone of the customer is turned into a 24-hour message service.

"The voice mail is similar to an answering machine because it will answer your phone when you are away. But in addition to call waiting, it allows you to actually send messages in your own recorded voice to other local telephones," Hinds said.

The service will also facilitate people who do not have the use of a phone. They will be given a "virtual number" through which friends, family and business associates will be able to access his/her mailbox and leave important messages. The customer will be able to receive messages from any touch tone phone.

"Wherever you are, you can call into that number and you can access those messages whether you are in New York or in some other part of this country," Hinds disclosed. She added that only persons

who the customer gives that PIN (Personal Identification Number) to will be able to access that person's messages.

Some of the other benefits of the system include knowing your important calls are being answered even if you are already on a call, the elimination of the need to buy an answering machine and the worry about power failures and the use of personalised greetings.

Hinds also said that the new service will coincide with the phone company's programme to install call boxes in various parts of the country.

Noting that the company has already started erecting call boxes in Berbice, Hinds said that by the end of February, there will be a "significant number" of call boxes in Georgetown.

She said that the voice mail system is available on a two months free trial basis and Hinds said all persons need to do is to fill up the voice mail application form which will be available within 24 hours after the application is received.

The GT&T executive also spoke of the company's activities relating to the expansion of its cellular services to a Mobile Digital Cellular link. This service will cover from Skeldon through to New Amsterdam right down the coast passing through Georgetown then on to Timehri, East Bank Demerara.

The official noted that there is no need for people to buy analogue services or phones as the company can supply the latest in digital telephone technology.

"We want you to know that

we will be supplying the latest in digital telephones for those consumers who want to buy," Hinds said, adding that the company will also supply insurance for its instruments.

She said the company will not be hooking up instruments which it suspects might be stolen.

Hinds also spoke of the company's provision of an internet service noting that it has four Internet Service Providers (ISPs).

She also spoke of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) which has an ISP being subsidised by the GT&T since the UNDP is involved in a Sustainable Development Networking Programme. That programme is intended to promote the use of services from the community through the internet and

to promote the benefits of the internet to schools, churches and service organisations throughout the country.

Hinds said the programme has not been getting the support that it merited and her company would have to review it with a view to making it more effective.

GT&T says it installed 6,000 new phones last year and intends to up that figure by in excess of 4,000 this year.

It also says it will commission containerised switches at Rose Hall, Corentyne; Nindy Park, East Bank Demerara; and Parika, East Bank Essequibo.

The company also plans to instal an ATM fibre optic ring around Georgetown for high-speed data transmission for the CARICOM Secretariat and the business community.

## To stop crime you must change the odds

Dear Sir,

Quick fix solutions to crime tend not to last. For crime to be kept in check, long term solutions are required. Those solutions must address at least three critical ingredients. First, there must be effective deterrence to prevent criminals

from acting. Second, once the criminal acts, the police must be equipped to apprehend. Thirdly, the court must dish out effective punishment.

If the general population had affordable wireless telephones, criminals would think twice before acting. They would never know whether a passing observer on the street called the police to report a crime, to describe the criminal, or to inform the police of the escape route. At night, the victim of the break-in could call the police and the neighbourhood patrols.

Deterrence works because criminals think there is a good chance they will be caught. As it stands, the odds favour the criminals. By the time the police are alerted, the criminal usually has vanished into the night or into a crowd.

Police apprehension requires timely information about crime in progress and during hot pursuit. If like many countries police on the beat or in vehicles have wireless communications, the probability of catching the criminal increases. As the odds of catching criminals increase, fewer criminals will take the risk of committing a crime.

A wireless telephone works when electric power is down. It has a built-in rechargeable battery.

You can also plug your wireless telephone into the

cigarette lighter in your car. While I agree that to effectively fight crime more resources are needed which the police force cannot afford at this moment a number of other options are opened to us which would not cost very much.

For example, as far as I understand, Mr. Earl Singh submitted a business plan to the government for a wireless telecom licence. His wireless telephones provide deterrence and apprehension. His affordable phones will work from Georgetown all the way down to Crabwood Creek. His licence is still pending. It is time to change the odds in favour of law-abiding citizens.

As another example, a number of businessmen in Corriverton are using radio phones to be in communication due to the result of the crime situation. The system is very effective but very expensive. A wireless system as proposed by Earl Singh would be far cheaper and accessible to a large number of people. If the police cannot afford the vehicles let citizens equip themselves. It will not cost the government much, only granting a licence.

I hope the government takes a serious look at his proposal.

Yours faithfully  
Mohamed Alim Mursalin

Stabrock Nass  
Mon. Jan 18<sup>th</sup> 1999

Letters. Letters. Letters...Letters...Lette

## Voice mail service is inadequate

Dear Sir,

The introduction by the Guyana Telephone and Telegraph Company (GT&T) of voice mail albeit on a one-month trial basis, is an insult to the intelligence of Guyanese.

At Present, that service is grossly inadequate because:

1. The time allotted for any given message is no more than 8 seconds. If the message being left is more than 8 seconds, the voice mail cuts out and so the message is incomplete.

2. The voice mail does not at this moment provide for the automatic transferral of calls to a telephone into the mailbox if the phone is not answered.

I recommend that GT&T

increase the allotted duration for each message to a minimum 45 seconds and add the feature that provides for the transfer of calls to the mailbox after a certain number of rings.

In this way, GT&T can ensure that these value-added services are of real value even if on a trial basis and so minimize criticisms about the expansion and quality of its service.

It is only if these modifications are done that persons can adequately assess the effectiveness and efficiency of this service and so decide whether to subscribe to it for a rate.

Yours faithfully  
Scottrene Lanyarde



**GT&T's**

Stobwek  
Jul 30 1999

# Voice Mail

## CUSTOMERS

*Dear Valued Customer,*

*The trial period for GT&T's Voice Mail Service ended on June 30, 1999. Please be advised that the service will be withdrawn gradually over the next few weeks.*

*We are grateful to you, our valued customer, for participating in the testing of the voice mail system and for your suggestions on various aspects of the service.*

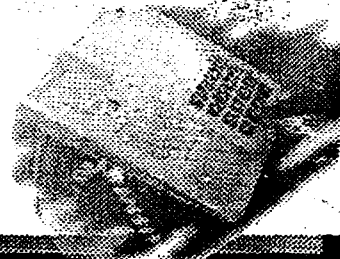
*We have designed and circulated a short questionnaire—to a random sample of customers—to solicit feedback on the configuration and quality of the service and whether it should be offered commercially. Customers who receive the questionnaire are asked to complete it and return it to any of GT&T's business offices by Monday, August 16, 1999. The questionnaire has also been posted on GT&T's web page and any customer who used the service can complete this copy.*

*We are not unmindful of the inconvenience that the withdrawal of the service is likely to cause. However, decisions on whether to offer the service commercially and how best to provision for immediate and projected demand have to await the analysis of customer feedback.*

*As always, we seek your patience and understanding.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Patricia Hinds.  
Director (Ag), Marketing & Sales  
Guyana Telephone & Telegraph Co.*



**GT&T** "The Best Value in Guyana"





infabuck  
4/25/2001

## Internet traffic briefly disrupted

The Caribbean Community Secretariat was one of the agencies unable to access the internet on Wednesday morning when a fault on the ASN Router caused a partial disruption of traffic.

The fault, which according to a release from the Guyana Telephone and Telegraph Company Limited (GT&T), was discovered at 07:55 hrs, by the Network Management Station, was successfully rectified forty minutes later at 08:35 hrs.

Among the agencies affected by the glitch were the Guyana Sugar Corporation, the American School, Internetworks, Omai Gold Mines Limited and the Charlotte Street Wesleyan Church.

This latest disruption in internet services follows that which occurred on Monday when it was reported by GT&T that failures on both the fibre optic and satellite links resulted in a total disruption of internet services.

That problem was said to have been caused by external circumstances which were beyond their control.

Another breakdown in the internet network occurred earlier in the year when users including internet service providers had their services disrupted without adequate warning.



## **Exhibit 7**

### **Website has been blocked by phone company**

*Dear Sir,*

<http://www.stabroeknews.com/Friday/page2.htm>

1/14/2000

Page 3 of 7

**GT&T has apparently come to realize that they stand to suffer serious competition from the internet-based website [www.dialpad.com](http://www.dialpad.com).**

**In their drive to maintain "economic viability" they have illegally blocked the site from all local access.**

**Once again the monopoly has demonstrated its disregard for Guyanese by employing such measures to achieve their financial objectives without even seeing it fit to inform internet users. Instead of stating that GT&T has blocked this site, for whatever reason, one gets a Page time out Error...indicating that either the dialpad server is busy or the page is temporarily down...which is not the case. Local ISPs have confirmed that GT&T is blocking this site.**

**Does GT&T have the right to block certain web sites on the internet?**

**Are they within their legal rights to do so?**

**Since there is no legislation in Guyana to decide which sites are to be blocked, how then can GT&T decide this? Under whose authority?**

**Yours faithfully,  
*Mahender Sharma***



*Korvajan 50/6/89*

## **Embarrassment at Telephone House**

THE public servants are back at work after striking for 57 days.

They had gone on strike to protest against the small increase on their salaries offered them by government.

During the strike, numerous government departments and agencies were disrupted by bomb scares. So disruptive were these calls that the Ministry of Home Affairs decided to seek the help of the local telephone monopoly.

The Guyana Telephone and Telegraph Company gave the impression that it could trace any call to and from the destinations.

The phone company released two lists of calls purporting to be the bomb hoax calls.

Some media houses

rushed to publish these lists.

People were embarrassed. Some decided to seek legal action.

They pointed to a clause in the operations of the company which announced that the phone company will protect the privacy of the subscribers.

It was also discovered that the lists had a strange feature.

Calls were received before they were made, or minutes after they were placed when there should have been no difference in the times.

The Home Affairs Ministry could not explain the discrepancies, neither could the officials at Telephone House.

The latter were the most embarrassed and refused to entertain questions on this issue.



STABROEK NEWS, Tuesday, February 1, 2000 Page 7

Letters...Letters...Letters...Letters...

**Can GT&T block this site?**

Dear Sir,

I received an email notice from my ISP today (see attached notice) that as of Feb 1st 2000, GT&T will begin blocking dialpad.com as it is in violation of their terms and conditions. As far as I recall the Minister has ruled that the proxy must come down and has not to date issued any directives or given GT&T authority to block any websites from the Guyanese online public.


Why therefore are they able to block the site and under whose authority? May I

remind you that Guyana is a democracy and citizens of this country are free to use or view any site at his or her pleasure. I would like to hear from the Minister his views on the blocking of this website? Is it with his sanction? It's show and tell time Government of Guyana, let's see what you're made of. This is the start of a dangerous precedent. I along with the rest of online Guyana wait with bated breath to see what you will do about this.

**Yours faithfully,  
Anand Beharry**

GUYANA CHRONICLE, Thursday, February 3, 2000  
Guyana Chronicle, Thursday, February 3, 2000

# What our Readers SAY...


**Internet blocking**

**WE CANNOT and must never allow organisations like GT&T to decide what we can and cannot do with our lives.**

Especially with our right to communicate freely via any method we see fit.

It is our birthright and our constitutional right to freedom of expression.

We are not slaves or indentured labourers any more.

We, individually, are the absolute power that will determine what we, individually can and cannot say, do and communicate with.

Our children need to freely explore this new technology so that they can grow smarter and contribute to the technological development of our suffering nation.

It is our only way out of economic misery.

**We must set our children free to learn without restrictions and lay down our wrath upon those who seek to obstruct us in our goals of self determination and prosperity.**

**TORONTO WATCHER**





## Internet providers, GT&T in clash over satellite system

Stabroek  
News

March 30, 1998

### -injunction granted against phone company

By Desiree Jodah

Managing Director of Solutions 2000, Edwin Workman, has obtained an interim injunction against the Guyana Telephone and Telegraph Company Limited (GT&T) restraining it from disconnecting, terminating or interfering with his company's service to its customers as provided by an agreement signed in May 1998.

On Monday, Solutions 2000 in an e-mail message to its clients, said that in an effort to increase speed and efficiency, the company had introduced a satellite system among other technologies to complement and increase its internet service. The message said that although the company had permission from the National Frequency Management Unit (NFMU), GT&T

Turn to page 2

## Internet providers, GT&T in clash over satellite system

### From page one

had threatened to disconnect its services and had reconfigured its network blocking Solutions 2000's use of the satellite system. This had significantly slowed the system.

According to the e-mail message, three internet service providers (ISPs)—Solutions 2000, Guyana Net and Internet Works—had paid the satellite outfit in an effort to provide a better service at a cheaper rate than GT&T was willing to give them. Solutions 2000 said that they

had been rewarded with a "slap in the face" by GT&T for their efforts.

And GT&T also released a statement saying that it had issued an ultimatum to one of the local ISPs to put its house in order or face termination of its service.

The telephone company said that it found the operator to be in breach of its agreement with the company and had given the ISP until 1800 hrs on Monday to remove an "unauthorised connection."

According to GT&T, the

operator, contrary to its contract with GT&T, had been re-routing traffic by a route other than that established or approved by the company.

Meanwhile, the ex-parte application filed by attorney-at-law Stephen Fraser on behalf of Workman, and granted by Justice Desmond Burch-Smith, also restrains GT&T, its agents and servants from disconnecting or discontinuing any telephone, or other service currently provided to Solutions 2000.

GT&T was also restrained

from implementing a proxy or any other restrictive configuration that may result in reduced performance of the network service provided by Solutions 2000 to its customers. A mandatory injunction was also granted directing GT&T to restore the service to the configuration of the internet network prior to March 8, 1999 at 1600 hrs until the hearing and determination of a summons which is returnable for March 15.

The orders were reportedly served on GT&T yesterday.



## **GT&T's UNJUSTIFIED COMPLAINT AGAINST i-NET COMMUNICATIONS INC. (i-NET)**

i-NET is concerned that there is a serious misunderstanding with regard to the internet services that it provides and the relationship of its operations to the services that GT&T is licensed to provide. i-NET is licensed to provide data services to end-users within Guyana. i-Net incorporates these services (Internet and Data Communication Services) for the provision of data nationally and internationally. This service is an internet operation, an integral part of which is the transfer of data nationally and internationally, utilising internet protocols, on behalf of its customers in Guyana. For its international operations, i-NET has installed its own satellite uplink/downlink system. By acquiring this facility, i-Net is able to provide its customers with a service that is reliable, adequate, efficient and reasonable, in keeping with Section 25 of the PUC Act. **The misunderstanding is related to the claim that i-Net has violated the Guyana Telephone & Telegraph's (GT&T) licence in operating an external data transfer facility, instead of using GT&T as its international gateway. The claim is entirely without foundation and this statement seeks to clarify the misunderstanding.**

- **INTERNATIONAL DATA TRANSMISSION ON BEHALF OF LOCAL SUBSCRIBERS IS A SERVICE WITHIN GUYANA**

i-NET is licensed to "provide data communication services within Guyana only". There seems to be a belief that the international transmission of data on behalf of subscribers within Guyana amounts to the provision of services outside of Guyana, in breach of this geographical limitation. This is quite wrong. i-NET does not provide services to anyone outside of Guyana.

The i-NET situation has an exact parallel in GT&T's licence, which limits GT&T to the provision of services throughout Guyana and its territorial waters. GT&T's services include telefax, telex and telegram service and telefax network service. These services involve integrally the international transmission and reception of telefax, telex and telegram services on behalf of persons within Guyana. But this does not violate GT&T's licence. The situation is quite different with GT&T's audiotext service, which is a service provided to persons outside of Guyana. **Unlike i-NET's data services, GT&T's audiotext service is a clear violation of GT&T's licence, which limits its services to persons within Guyana.**

- **GT&T IS NOT LICENSED TO PROVIDE INTERNET SERVICES**

The provision of internet services is open to competition, but GT&T is excluded from this area. GT&T's licence does not permit it to provide internet services nor to operate equipment for the provision of such services. The services that GT&T is authorised to provide are clearly specified in its licence and internet service is not one of these. The World Wide Web revolution began in 1993, with its commercialisation in 1994.

However, the agreement for the sale of the Guyana Telecommunications Corporation (GTC) was signed in June 1990 and, in December 1990, its licence was issued. GT&T's entry into the internet business is, therefore, outside of its licence.

Further, the agreement, assuming it to be valid, between the Government of Guyana and ATN, GT&T's parent company, did not contemplate, nor is it stated, to extend to the internet. The subsequent licence merely incorporates the provisions of the agreement and is, therefore, limited to the telephone technologies expressly stated therein.

- **GT&T IS NOT LICENSED TO OPERATE EQUIPMENT TO PROVIDE INTERNET SERVICES**

The equipment that GT&T is licensed to operate (its telecommunication system) is clearly defined and specified in its licence. The definition captures the switches, transmission and distribution lines and related facilities of a traditional telephone network system. The definition does not extend to the use of such equipment for the provision of internet services, and such use is not defined in its licence. In fact, the definition of GT&T's telecommunications system is a transcription of the definition which appears in the licence granted to British Telecommunications in 1984. Internet services could not have been listed, because at the time when GT&T was granted its licence, the internet was not yet deployed for commercial exploitation and the World Wide Web was not in existence. The internet, which was then known as ARPANET, had a relatively limited technology and was confined to a select group of universities and defence contractors, as a means of exchanging data on military research. It was not seen at the time as a commercial prospect for the telecommunications industry.

GT&T's addition of internet services to its authorised telecommunications services constitutes a violation of its licence.

*On the other hand, i-Net is properly authorised to operate its internet equipment as it is licensed to operate "microwave data equipment and data communication services within Guyana only"*

- **GT&T'S AUTHORISED NETWORK EQUIPMENT SHOULD NOT PROVIDE INTERNET GATEWAY SERVICES**

It should be clear from the above that the telephone network equipment that GT&T is licensed to operate is not sanctioned to provide gateway facilities for internet services. To suggest that i-NET use GT&T as the international gateway for its data services is to recommend the use of an unlicensed service. i-Net's customers and potential customers may also be required to use GT&T's unauthorised internet services. A regulatory authority cannot maintain its credibility, if it is seen to support or encourage such choices and defections. In addition, from published reports, it appears that GT&T is either unable, or unwilling, to provide i-Net with internet gateway services equivalent to the quality and cost I-Net is currently receiving from its suppliers. The country would be

in a sad state, given the potential for internet services to lift its developmental aspirations, were i-Net to take an unauthorised and substandard service from GT&T at a higher price.

- **GT&T'S AUTHORISED INTERNATIONAL DATA TRANSMISSION SERVICE DOES NOT COVER INTERNET DATA**

GT&T claims that it has a monopoly in national and international data transmission. But the claim is subject to, at least, two important qualifications. In the first place, the transmission function that GT&T is licensed to perform is based on, and limited by, the transmission equipment that GT&T is authorised to operate – a traditional telephone network system. In the second place, GT&T's data transmission refers to the data traffic normally carried by a telephone network, such as telex, telefax and telegraph traffic, as distinct from voice communications. These types of data traffic are listed as authorised services in GT&T's licence. Internet services could not have been contemplated or included in the licence, because at the time when GT&T was granted its licence, the internet was not yet deployed for commercial exploitation. Also the World Wide Web that is the basis of the data transfer industry was not yet in existence.

- **THE MINISTER AND THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION (PUC) EACH HAS A DUTY TO PROMOTE AND MAINTAIN COMPETITION IN TELCOMMUNICATION SERVICES NOT SUBJECT TO MONOPOLY**

As noted earlier, GT&T's internet service is an unlicensed operation. All aspects of the internet business are reserved, by the limitations imposed on GT&T's licence, for competitive provision by other licensed operators, both Guyanese and non-Guyanese.

One of the duties of the minister responsible for telecommunications and the Director of Telecommunications (for the time, being the Public Utilities Commission) is to maintain and promote effective competition in areas not subject to monopoly under any licence granted by the minister. [Section 4(2)(b) of the PUC Act]. To discharge this duty, the first thing that ought to be done is to determine the validity of GT&T's claimed monopoly and the areas that are open to competition. Without such clear clarifications, telecommunications operations will be plagued with uncertainty, confusion, controversy and litigation. This will discourage potential investors, both Guyanese and non-Guyanese. It will also obstruct the growth of competition in telecommunication and internet services and retard the economic development of the country.

- **NOT REASONABLE TO PROCEED AGAINST i-NET FOR ALLEGED INFRINGEMENT OF GT&T'S MONOPOLY BEFORE DETERMINING WHETHER GT&T HAS THE MONOPOLY IT CLAIMS**

i-NET respectfully submits that it would be unreasonable, and certainly unjust, to both i-NET and its customers, for action to be taken against i-Net for what GT&T alleges is a breach of its monopoly, without first establishing whether GT&T has a monopoly with respect to the specific issue in question. **i-NET is convinced that GT&T is not licensed to provide internet services or to operate the technology for this purpose.**

**Moreover, GT&T has no authority, much less a monopoly, to provide an international gateway facility for the transmission and reception of internet data.**

- i-NET NOT INFORMED OF ANY VIOLATION OF ITS LICENCE OR THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT**

i-NET recognizes that the PUC or the Director of Telecommunications (the Commission, for the time being) is the statutory authority for the purposes of initiating proceedings against a telecommunications operator for any violation of the Telecommunications Act or its operating licence. Before taking any such action, the Director or Commission must notify the operator of the violation committed, with specific reference to the section of the Act or the Condition of the licence that is being violated. i-Net has not been notified, and is not aware, that it has violated any provision of the Telecommunications Act or any condition of its licence.

- APPEAL TO THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE PUC TO DETERMINE THE SCOPE AND LIMITS OF GT&T'S MONOPOLY**

i-NET hereby makes an appeal for an early determination of the scope and limits of GT&T's monopoly by the court. The determination should be published and the Commission should take such steps as may be necessary to ensure that GT&T does not conduct any operation that is not authorised by its licence. This is an indispensable requirement of good regulation, particularly with respect to the duty of the Minister and the Public Utilities Commission to promote and maintain competition in telecommunications services. It is also an indispensable condition for the avoidance of uncertainty, confusion, controversy and wasteful litigation in the provision of telecommunications services. **i-NET is confident that the determination will show that GT&T's licence does not authorise it to provide internet services, or to operate the special technology for this purpose, or to serve as an international gateway for internet data transfer purposes.** i-NET is confident that the determination will end the misunderstanding regarding the conduct of i-Net's operations in relation to GT&T's claimed monopoly.

**Finally, i-NET further appeals, in the context of Government's policy and initiative for the promotion of competition in telecommunications services, that whatever is reasonably possible be done to facilitate the entry and success of Guyanese investment in the new Information and Communications Technology, of which i-NET is a pioneering example.**



Exhibit 12

Value for your money

# Guyana Consumers Association

156 Waterloo Street, North Cummingsburg, Georgetown, Guyana. P.O. Box 10467.

Telephone - 02-63090

4<sup>th</sup> September, 2001

Fax (612) 204-9499

Mr Earl J. Singh  
Chief Executive Officer  
Caribbean Wireless Telecom, LLC  
Georgetown

Dear Sir,

The Guyana Consumers' Association and the Consumers' Advisory Bureau will be making representations to the FCC vis-à-vis "Petition for Waiver of the benchmark settlement rate for Guyana".

We understand that yourselves and Caribbean Telecommunications Ltd are also making representation to FCC. We would like to mention a few points which you may wish to integrate into your representations, if you think fit.

- (1) In its petition GT&T talks glibly about its "Expansion Plan". In point of fact GT&T has not carried out the Expansion Plan which it had agreed to do when it started to do business here and on which basis it was granted a licence over a decade ago. In fact, GT&T has publicly declared on several occasions that there would be no expansion or improvement in the system unless it was given a steep rise in rates. This steep rise would be in the vicinity of 1000 per cent.
- (2) GT&T claims that it has fibre optic cables running from Georgetown to Diamond, to Beterverwagting, to Timchri, to Skeldon, to Parika, to Mahaicony, and that all communities within the path of these cables are served with telephones. This statement is patently misleading. Several villages along GT&T's fibre optic route are not served and thousands of families along those fibre optic routes require telephones and cannot get them.
- (3) GT&T claims that it used capital infusion from ATN, settlement revenues and all its profits, except for the year 1997, to offset dramatic changes in telecommunications in Guyana. GT&T paints itself as an altruistic institution which has been here 10 years without getting anything for it. To the Guyanese public this statement is quite hollow.

When ATN came here to purchase the telephone company, they did not even have enough money to complete the purchase and the sale had to be held up. Further, GT&T, in ensuing years, made vast sums on the audiotext, and ATN has skimmed off six per cent of the gross revenues of GT&T per month via a mechanism known as Advisory Fees. These Advisory Fees now total billions of Guyana dollars. ATN/GT&T have certainly done very well for themselves and are certainly not selfless, altruistic do-gooders.

Yours sincerely

*Eileen Cox*

Eileen Cox  
President

**GUYANA CONSUMERS' ASSOCIATION**



